7: Shklovsky -- 248 T-3 (1891-92)1916 Yakut
116, 756, 775

"The ideas of life and death are original. Each man has allotted to him two shadows, and liars have three. After a man's death these shadows return to the Abaghi, and are given the duty of guarding the guilty Abaghi whom Arsin Dolai consigns to the 'iron barn'; but the spirit of the dead man becomes a Yer, or wandering spirit, invisible except to the Shaman. In the 'central place' (the earth) there are a multitude of these Yer, and in the words of Milton:--

Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth,
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep.

These Yer are the active helpers of the evil spirits, for they can enter the bodies of people on earth, and so afflict them with all kinds of diseases: rheumatism, gastric and nervous diseases, etc. Besides Yer there are in the universe many wicked--that is to say, 'powerful'--gods, whose greatest pleasure it is to torment men, maim their animals, tear the nets of the fishers, etc. None can implore the god save those who from their birth are set apart by the good spirits, the Shamans, male and female."

18: Priklonski--82 [3] E-5 (no date) 1891 Yakut
116, 764, 768, 775

After a man's death the soul is not immediately transferred to the realm of the demon, but wanders around the places where the defunct used to stay (especially where he has committed sins), through three days. The corpse, i.e. the body which has been left by the soul causes fear and shudder among those left behind. For an evil spirit dwells in the defunct, who by this fact alone makes the body impure, and makes so the tent in which the man has died. Traces of the Abassy's presence are visible all around in each thing. The family of the defunct therefore leaves the tent and emigrates to another locality or at most they construct a new tent near the abandoned one.

18: Priklonski--83 [3] E-5 (no date) 1891 Yakut
116, 756, 766, 775

In the village I learned that only shamans had been buried on trees in recent times. In their lifetime their only concern had been spiritual affairs, so that they had to be buried somewhere nearer the heaven even after their deaths. This conception does not equalize the shamans to inhabitants of heaven, but only means that he must not be locked up in the earth who in his lifetime was connected with it only by tender ties. They were buried in the woods at an inaccessible place so that one should come near it as rarely as possible. Just as the shaman, as long as he was alive, had the gift to harm a personal enemy for personal revenge, just as well his soul, freed of the body, may trouble the survivors after the shaman's death. Not a single native, and not even a Russian born in the Yakutsk region would venture to approach the grave of a shaman or even to touch it.

19: Kharuzin -- 58-59 E-4 (no date) 1898 Yakut-1-2
116, 428, 594, 614, 775

The conviction that the soul of the deceased will remain 40 days in the dwelling, induces the heirs to carry out precisely the provisions of the testament, the more so since they proceed to the division of the property very soon after the death of the father, which to a certain extent works for the betterment of the widow's position. Thus the husband, if his children are under age, can at the time of death designate his wife as the "elder" of the family, can assign to her a part of his property, can express the wish that the wife's dowry should be returned to her. The dying man does not have the right to designate any persons as heirs except those who are heirs by virtue of their blood relationship with the testator. He cannot deprive his sons of their portions of the inheritance in favor of one [59] of them, even though he would dispose but of the acquired property, and not the patrimony; even in cases where the testator has no children, he cannot bequeath either the acquired or patrimonial property to his wife. In all these instances the testament is held invalid: the sons deprived of theirinheritance in favor of one of their brothers, the kinsmen, to whose injury the testator left his property tohis widow, will claim their rights, and the Clan Administration, or the Natives' Court, handling inheritance questions, will retrieve the property from the son or widow, in order to divide it up among the heirs. In a word, the written testament is held invalid, if the lawful heirs are deprived of their inheritance; it is put into effect only if the heirs and relations are satisfied with the will of the testator. Permitting in theory the right to dispose of his property on the part of the

testator, in practice the clan limits it extremely in the interests of the clan group, guarding the rights of the lawful heirs, whose economic welfare cannot be alien to the whole clan unit. In this right to deny the validity of the testament if, in the opinion of the clan, it does not satisfy in equal degree the lawful heirs, one can see a vivid example of the living force of clan existence, which despite changing conditions, permeates the structure of the life of the Yakuts.

43: Karutz--74 [9] E-2 (no date) 1925 Yakut
116, 764, 775

Life after death is considered as wholly certain. The corpses are put in half, hollow tree-trunks which are suspended between trees; the huts of the dead are allowed to decay.

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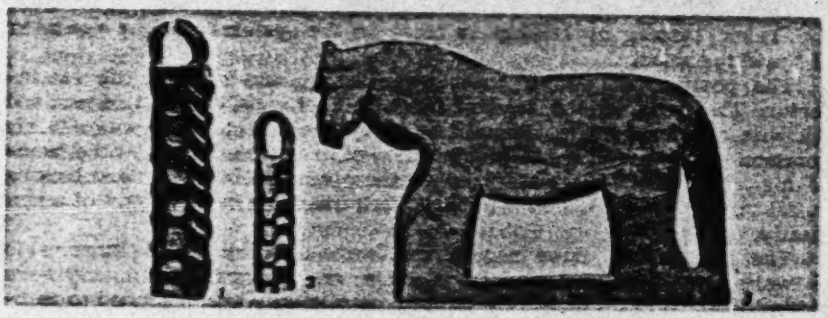

Wooden toys: 1—ox, 2—cow; 3—horse.

771 the toyons, were zealous Christians. Actually, this is understandable, since Christianity was far better suited than shamanism to satisfying the class interests of the rich people. Nevertheless, the old, pre-Christian religion did not entirely disappear, and the older beliefs, although somewhat modified through the influence of Christian ideas, still kept their hold; and the shamans, the ministers of the old cult, still enjoyed authority, although they were forced to some extent to conceal their activities from the tsarist administrators and Orthodox clergy. Shamanism and the animistic beliefs associated with it seem to have been the most persistent element of the old Yakut religion.

756 The Yakut shamanism was closest of all to the Tungus type. The
171 Yakut shaman tambourine (wide-rimmed and oval) was exactly the same as the Tungus tambourine; the costume was also the Tungus type, except that the Yakut shamans officiated with uncovered heads. The similarity involved more than just their outward appearance; it also showed up in the more important details of the beliefs and rituals.

756 The Yakut shaman (oyuun) was considered the professional attendant of the spirits. According to Yakut belief, anyone chosen by the spirits to serve them could become a shaman, but the shamans were usually from the same families: "in a clan where a shaman has once appeared, he does not pass away," said the Yakuts. Apart from men shamans, there were also women shamans (*удаган*), who were considered to be
[753] even more powerful. A sign of readiness to adopt the profession of shaman was a nervous ailment, which was interpreted as evidence that the person had been "elected" by the spirits; this was followed by a period of training under the guidance of an old shaman, and finally by a ritual public consecration.

756 It was thought that the spirit electing the shaman became his patron
776 spirit (emeget), and that it was the soul of an important shaman who had died earlier. Its image in the form of a flat copper effigy was worn among the other pendants with the shaman costume; the image was also called an emeget. The patron spirit imbues the shaman with strength and knowledge. The shaman sees and hears only through his emeget. Besides the latter, every shaman has his own animal double (iye-kyyl, "mother beast") in the form of an invisible eagle, stallion, bull, bear and so on. Finally, besides these personal spirits, every shaman was associated with a number of other spirits in human or bestial form when casting his spells. The different categories of spirits associated with the shaman's activity had their own specific names.

[753] The most important and largest group of spirits were the abaahy (or abaasy), devouring spirits to whose activity certain diseases were attributed.

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

attributed. The believing Yakuts considered that the cure of disease by a shaman actually consisted in elucidating which abaasy had caused the disease, battling against them or offering them a sacrifice, and expelling them from the patient. According to shamanistic belief, the abaasy lived in tribes or clans partly in the "upper" and partly in the "lower" world, as well as in the "middle" world, the earth.

The spirits living in the "upper" world were offered sacrifices of horses, and those in the "lower" world of cattle. Close to the abaasy were the yel, evil spirits, for the most part minor ones, who were the souls of people who had died prematurely or violently, and also the souls of deceased shamans, sorcerers and so on. The ability to cause people harm was attributed to these spirits, but they also lived in the "middle" world (on the earth and around it). The beliefs about them are very close to the Russian superstitions regarding "unclean" or possessed dead persons. Small spirits called kelens were considered to assist the shaman to do various tricks while he was performing.

Among the important deities in the shamanistic pantheon first place is taken by the powerful and awe-inspiring Uluu-Toyon, who was head of the "upper" world spirits and patron of shamans: "he created the shaman and taught him to fight against all evils; he gave people fire." Living in the upper world (on the western side of the third heaven), Uluu-Toyon was also able to come down to earth in the form of larger animals such as the bear, elk, ox or black stallion. Below Uluu-Toyon were other more or less powerful deities, each of which had its own name and epithet, its residence and its special interest. Examples of these are Ala Buuray Toyon (Arsan Duolay or Allara-Ogon'or, "the old man from underground"), head of the underground abaasy, creator of everything harmful and unpleasant, Aan Arbatyy Toyon (or Arkhakh Toyon), who caused consumption and so on.

The presence of the important deities in the shamanistic pantheon of the Yakuts distinguishes their shamanism from the Tungus type (the Tungus did not believe in the important gods to a very large extent) and brings it close to the shamanism of the Altay-Sayan peoples. Generally speaking, it is a feature of a later stage of the development of shamanism.

The main duties of the shamans were to "cure" sick people and animals and to "avert" all catastrophies. Their devices could be reduced to casting spells (accompanied by singing, dancing, banging of a tambourine, and so on), usually at night, during which the shaman worked himself into a frenzy and, according to Yakut superstition, his soul flew up to join the spirits, or else the spirits entered his body; his magic enabled him to overcome and chase out the wicked spirits, to learn about the sacrifices required by the spirits, to make them, and so on. On the side, during the ritual the shaman became a diviner, answering various questions put to him by the onlookers, and also showing various magic tricks which were supposed to increase his authority and make people more frightened of him.

In return for his offices the shaman received a fee, particularly if his spells were successful, which usually varied between 1 ruble and 25 rubles or more. Furthermore, the shaman was always given food and drink and allowed to eat the sacrificial meat, part of which he sometimes took home. Although the shamans usually had their own households, which were at times of quite a size, the fee for their magic constituted a considerable item of their income. The shaman's demand for a sacrifice was a great burden to the population.